

Time Travel Australia

Our Business is in Ruins

Newsletter Spring 2007

2007 continues to be a very busy year. I leave for Vietnam at the end of the month and we also have a small group walking a portion of the Santiago de Compostela in Spain during October.

I took a group from the University of Sydney to Patagonia in March and that was spectacular as usual. This tour included a cruise along the coast from Puerto Montt to Puerto Natales. Due to problems with their main vessel, the cruise company had to schedule one of their older fleet – no hint of luxury but the scenery made up for any deficiencies. A few of us also joined a cruise from Punta Arenas to Ushuaia in Tierra del Fuego. To the opposite extreme, this vessel was very luxurious but when all was said and done, I have some very fond memories of the first cruise, particularly the other passengers. The second cruise had all the trimmings - with passengers to match! Say no more.

Ian Fraser is heading off to Patagonia in November leading a natural history tour. This tour has proved very popular and we intend repeating the tour again in 2008.

I called into Spain on my way home from Patagonia and spent a wonderful week in Montefrio, an Andalusian village about 65km from Granada. I was fine tuning the 'Al Andalus' tour for May 2008 and found some really interesting villages and sites that are now included in the itinerary.

A group of us returned to Balranald in March and June to continue our project surveying the Waldaira Station. We surveyed a range of landscapes from the river front, around dry lake beds, across clay pans and through mallee scrub. As the property is over 30,000ha, it would be a mammoth task to survey it in its entirety so we are testing various sections with some very pleasing results. I don't have the final tally with me but we would have over 100 sites recorded including artefact scatters, scarred trees, middens, oven mounds and hearths. We will be working on finalising a report on our work later this month.

We toured South America in July and August this year. All went all until the very end when those who had opted to stay for the jungle extension experienced the earthquake in Peru first hand. We were one hour short of leaving and in the departure lounge at Lima

when it struck. The building shook, some glass shattered, the floor wobbled like jelly and two and

half minutes later we were evacuated and left to stand on the run-way for an hour or two until they decided what to do with us. We eventually flew out about five hours behind schedule but all safe and sound. One member of the group was *en route* to Nazca when it struck. You can see her comments later.

This tour concluded with an option to visit the Amazon Basin at the end and it was my first visit to this area. My only complaint was that there was no archaeological sites anywhere but I suppose for the rest of the group that was a blessing! Seriously, it was a fantastic few days and a huge cultural shift from the highlands. Boat travel is really the only way to get around – apart from chartered flights landing in a clearing in the jungle – and a very relaxing way to travel. As far as wildlife is concerned, we saw six species of monkey, over 80 species of birds and one tapir – Pancho was his name so he doesn't really count. Juan also found a jaguar footprint only about five minutes walk from where we had been the night before! While it would have been a wonderful sight, I am glad we didn't come across this beast in the dark.

Come along to our Christmas party and hear more about this year's travels.

Christmas Party 12.30-4.30pm, 15 December 2007 Jerrabomberra Community Centre

You are all invited. This is a great chance to get together and discuss past or proposed tours. Please get in touch if you need directions etc.

Jumping Castle for the kids. Snacks provided, BYO drinks.

RSVP –
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An Andean Adventure 2007

I arrived home safely after an eventful finale to the 'Andean Adventure'.

Juan tracked me down in Nazca, the morning after the earthquake, and gave me some details. He, along with the people who organized the Lima - Nazca tour, had tried to reach me in Nazca on Wednesday evening, without success. I think the power was down in the whole region. The message was to get back to Lima, without delay.

On Wednesday evening, I was on the bus at Ica, when the earthquake occurred, having passed through Pisco and Paracas, an hour or so earlier. It was dark and the bus came to a standstill and shook for what seemed like several minutes. From the bus window I could see that the street was very crowded. I saw a flash of light, and at first thought someone had been shot, this must have been power lines coming down. People were screaming, and many fell to the ground. Later, many people started running, while others stood in groups, holding on to one another. When the shaking stopped, the bus conductor told us it was a 'terremoto', but there was no danger!! (Another word to add to my limited Spanish vocabulary). We continued to drive slowly down the street, there were many people, running and running. We drove out of the town and into the darkness, and eventually arrived at Nazca ~9.30pm, an 8 hour journey.

On arrival in Nazca, the bus station was in complete darkness. After spending the last 5 days in the Amazon, with restricted power, I assumed this was more of the same, and was cursing these South American towns for not running their generators for longer. A taxi driver eventually located me, in the darkness, and took me to my hotel. Still, complete darkness, lucky I had bought new torch batteries in Cusco before travelling on. I was still unaware of the severity of the quake.

I flew over the lines early the next morning, it was a beautiful day, clear blue sky, warm and sunny, and I saw the lines clearly. I then went happily off to breakfast and do a little souvenir shopping, before the telephone messages came in from Juan and the other tour people, to leave Nazca immediately. I got the 11.30am bus back to Lima, armed with fruit and water, as we were told there would be no food available on the journey. It took ~12 hours to reach Lima, arriving just after midnight. The road around the epicentre of the earthquake was badly damaged, and I think a critical bridge was reduced to one lane of traffic. At one point the bus driver let us get off the bus to take photos of the damaged road. It was already dark by then, so my photos aren't great. It took about 5 hours to crawl through this badly

damaged region. All the time people were walking past the bus, carrying blankets and bags of possessions, with little kids, babies, dogs. I took a few photos of the collapsed houses along the road side, but I did not take photos of the people from the bus window, as a mark of respect for their losses.

There was no sign of panic. Just people, doggedly walking in groups along the road, carrying their possessions. The traffic on the road was pretty chaotic, with little to no police presence, at one point a fleet of 8-10 ambulances passed through, and a police helicopter hovered overhead. Many cars were crammed full of people, I was told later that they would be trying to reach Lima, where they would have relatives.

I let my family know that I was OK first thing next day. They had already put the wheels in motion, looking for me, but I had not left my passport number with anyone, which was not helping them. I also hadn't left them a contact phone number of anyone in Canberra who could speak Spanish, so when my son called the Paracas hotel, where I was supposed to stay on Thursday night, he got the answering machine message in Spanish, and was non the wiser. These are two valuable lessons I have learned.

In spite off all this drama, the trip was worth it. To me, seeing the Nazca lines was like seeing Machu Picchu, and the Amazon etc, all of which were amazing, and well worth the effort. The whole trip has given me food for thought for weeks to come.

I consider having such a close encounter with the earthquake, as just another of those 'life experiences'. I was relieved to hear that you and the group escaped harm while you were waiting at Lima airport, no doubt there were a few anxious moments.

Judy Cassells

K'ente - Chamana Primary School Cusco, Peru

For several years now Time Travel and Carter Corporation (my brother's company) have been supporting this small school. It is located near the beginning of the Inka Trail and has 60 or so students ranging from kindergarten through to year six. The government provides teachers but there is little funding for supplies or equipment. While it is close to the Cusco/Mach Picchu railway line and adjacent to the Inka Trail, it is remote by our standards and lacks many basic services. Power lines pass the school but to access power would cost many thousands of dollars.

Over the past three years we have provided stationery and general supplies for the school and last Christmas each child received an individual gift bag. Donations collected during our most recent visit resulted in the purchase of stationery as well as a Roneo-graph – a manual photo-copier. We all take photocopying for granted these days while the teachers at this school have to write out 60 copies of each document that the children need – homework lists, tests, notes for parents etc.

While we were there this year we discussed ideas for future donations including:

- Continued provision of basic supplies;
- Setting up a school garden/farm including the purchase of a cow, sheep and chickens. This would not only supplement the diet of the children but also give them some training in animal care and gardening;
- Assistance for students who wish to continue on to secondary school. The nearest high school is about two hours away and children would need to board if they want to continue their studies. We hope to be able to assist a few families by paying school fees and lodging for those in need. Costs are minimal by our standards but well out of the reach of most farming families.

Donations are most welcome. I will put together a photo-board for display at the Christmas party and hope to collect a few dollars then. I must also point out that all moneys donated go to the school, we have no administration costs apart from bank account keeping fees.

Scheduled Tours - 2008

Contact Chris Carter for details.

Pyramids, Temples & Tombs: Archaeology in Mexico, Belize & Guatemala. 23 days, January, 2008

This tour will explore the homelands of a range of past cultures including the Aztecs, Maya, Toltecs and Olmecs. From the Caribbean through the jungles of the Yucatan to the snow-capped peaks surrounding the Valley of Mexico, we will visit sites including Teotihuacan, Monte Alban, Mitla, Tikal, Palenque, Chichen Itza, Uxmal, Mayapan and Tulum.

Balranald, Mungo & Beyond: Prehistory & history in Western NSW

14 days, March, 2008

Led by Chris Carter

This tour will commence with a visit to Waldaira Station near Balranald where we have been carrying out archaeological surveys over the past two years. Here we will visit a range of sites including canoe trees and oven mounds on the banks of the Murrumbidgee, artefact scatters across the claypans and hearths over 20,000 years old. We will then move on to the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area. We will visit well known sites such as Lake Mungo and the Walls of China but also visit some of the lesser visited area to see Aboriginal quarries and ancient middens.

The tour will include visits to Mildura and Wentworth to look at the history of the river trade and experience some of the fine culinary delights of the region. Menindee and Broken Hill are next on the itinerary followed by visits to Mootwingee and Sturt National Parks.

Accommodation on this tour will include motels/hotels and four nights camping (all equipment provided).

Al Andalus – Morocco & Sth Spain

22 days, May 2008

Led by Chris Carter

Morocco and Spain share their heritage, at least in part. One aim of the tour will be to illustrate how the Moors influenced modern Spanish culture and to compare and contrast Morocco and Andalusia as it is today and how it may have been in the past.

This tour will commence in central Morocco, move inland to visit several of the classic cities before passing through the Rif mountains to Tangier where we cross the Straits of Gibraltar into Southern Spain – ‘al Andalus’ to the Moors. Moving through the mountains we will visit Ronda before moving on to Sevilla and the original Muslim capital of Cordoba. We will then follow the fall of Islam in southern Spain and follow the frontier as it collapsed toward Granada.

In Morocco we will visit sites in their current Islamic setting including the cities and towns of Rabat, Fez, Meknes and Chefchauen along with their medieval medinas, souqs and mosques.

In Spain, the tour will visit many of the more famous Moorish sites in Ronda, Sevilla, Cordoba and Granada as well as tracing the evidence of their settlements off the ‘tourist trail’, through the villages

of Andalusia. We will visit World Heritage listed sites including the Mezquita (the Great Mosque), Medina A Zahara, the Giralda, the Alhambra and the Renaissance cities of Baeza and Úbeda.

This tour is being run through the University of Sydney Centre for Continuing Education.

Archaeological Field Work

Arica, Chile

October/November 2008.

Led by Chris Carter

Sixteen days of field work are planned and will involve a range of activities including:

- * the excavation of an archaic site flanking the Lluta River just north of Arica. This work continues the project commenced in 2006;
- * survey of sites at the mouth of the Quebrada de Vitor, 40km south of Arica;
- * continue survey and recording of Inka Trails near Zapahuira and Socroma.

Apart from recording, excavation and the sorting and cataloguing of artefacts we will also visit other sites in the area.

The project will be directed by Professor Calogero Santoro PhD of the Universidad de Tarapaca, Arica.

An Introduction to Andean Archaeology:

Chile, Bolivia & Peru

16 days, departs November, 2008

Led by Chris Carter

This shorter version of our Andean Adventure tour will enable those participating in our fieldwork project to follow it with a tour from highland Chile, into Bolivia and conclude in Peru. This tour will provide a basic understanding of the cultures of the Central Andean Region of South America and visit a range of sites including La Paz, Tiwanaku, Isla del Sol in Lake Titicaca, Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley.

This tour can be taken separately or in conjunction with the field-work.

An option is available to walk the Inka Trail (add four days).

In the Wake of the Beagle: The Natural History of Patagonia

18 days November 2008

Led by Ian Fraser

While you will be spellbound by the majestic Andes Mountains and the glaciers of the Southern Ice-field, this tour will also provide an opportunity to see some of the abundant wildlife from this unique region. This tour will focus on the environment, flora and fauna of this spectacular region. You will see glaciers, snow-capped volcanoes, ice blue lakes and wander through lush beech forests in search of wildlife - commonly seen species include Darwin's rhea, guanaco, grey fox, condor, skunks, armadillo and a variety of other birds. Marine species include dolphins, sea lions, Magellanic and Humboldt penguins, sea otters and numerous waterbirds including kelp gulls, kelp geese, cormorants, lap-wings, sandpiper and the fittingly named 'flightless steamer duck'.

Proposed Tours 2009

Chile: A Land of Extremes

21 days, June 2009

Walking the Inca Trails: Chile, Bolivia & Peru

23 days, May, 2009

An Andean Adventure: Chile, Bolivia & Peru

22 days, May, 2009

The Art & Archaeology of Spain

21 days, July 2009

If you are a member of a club or interest group that may be interested in a lecture on archaeology, we would be happy to participate (provided we are given enough warning). We have given lectures to a variety of groups ranging from primary school to College students and including the University of the Third Age.

We would be happy to organise group or independent tours using one of our established itineraries or customise one based around our knowledge of particular areas.

Chris Carter

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